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# THE MORNING NEWS

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## Bloomberg unveils plan to save NY from climate change

NEW YORK (AFP) - New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg on Tuesday unveiled a \$19.5 billion plan to boost the city's defenses against climate change, seven months after superstorm Sandy devastated the US East Coast.

The blueprint features structures like a series of six-meter-high (20-foot) waterfront walls and dikes to prevent flooding of the kind that idled the city for days in the late October 2012 storm.

Sandy claimed 43 lives in New York alone -- the total US death toll was about 120 -- knocked out over half of Manhattan's power grid for several days, paralyzed transport and caused millions of dollars in damage in coastal areas.

Bloomberg announced the plan as he released a study of more than 400 pages on the risks that climate change entails for New York.

He warned that in 2050, a disaster similar to Sandy could have even more serious consequences. He said it is projected that a quarter of the city will be in areas prone to flooding.

"We have to look ahead to anticipate any and all future needs... Sandy cost our city \$19 billion in damages and lost economic activity. We forecast that a storm like Sandy could cost around \$90 billion by mid-century," the mayor said.

Bloomberg said he anticipates some projects on the waterfront will be controversial, especially those that block the view to the ocean.

He insisted however he was bent on safeguarding New York's 835 kilometers (520 miles) of coastline. Some 400,000 people already live in flood risk areas, where a total of 270,000 jobs are on the line.

## Aruba Marriott's Ben Figaroa receives Revenue Business Leadership Award



A proud Ben Figaroa shows his award

The Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino proudly announces the recognition of Ben Figaroa, Director of Revenue Strategy, who won the Revenue Management Business Leadership Award for the Americas South Region.

After receiving the award for the Fourth Quarter Revenue title in 2012, the Aruban native was recognized as the top performer in the Americas South Region and earned the overall 2012 Revenue Management Business Leadership Award. He was awarded the title based on the astonishing revenue results for the Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino in 2012 increasing market share and implementing a dynamic pricing strategy. The Marriott Southern region full service hotels consist of over 200 hotels and resorts.

The Aruba Marriott Resort congratulates Ben with this astonishing award. Pabien Ben!

## Island dignitaries join the Philippine community on Aruba to celebrate 115 years of independence

Aruba is home to such an extensive community of Filipino immigrants and their descendants that island dignitaries welcome the opportunity to share their annual celebration of Philippine Independence Day with them each June 12.

More than a decade ago, the Honorary Consul of the Philippines to Aruba, Ami Henriquez-Mendes, known among her friends and colleagues as "The Iron Lady" petitioned the island government to make the affair a public event, conducted with a lavish display of Filipino culture before the namesake statue in Wilhelmina Park in Oranjestad.

Island dignitaries including Aruba's Governor Fredis Refunjol, Minister of Infrastructure, Immigration and Environment, Benny Sevinger, Minister of Justice and Education, Arthur Dowers, Minister of Tourism, Transport and Labor, Otmar Oduber, President of Parliament, Paul Croes and several members of parliament were among those present.

The national anthems were sung for the raising of the flag of both nations, and Father Toti Fuentevelilla performed the convocation, which was followed by a traditional offering of floral tributes.

Continued on pg 4



Island dignitaries at the event

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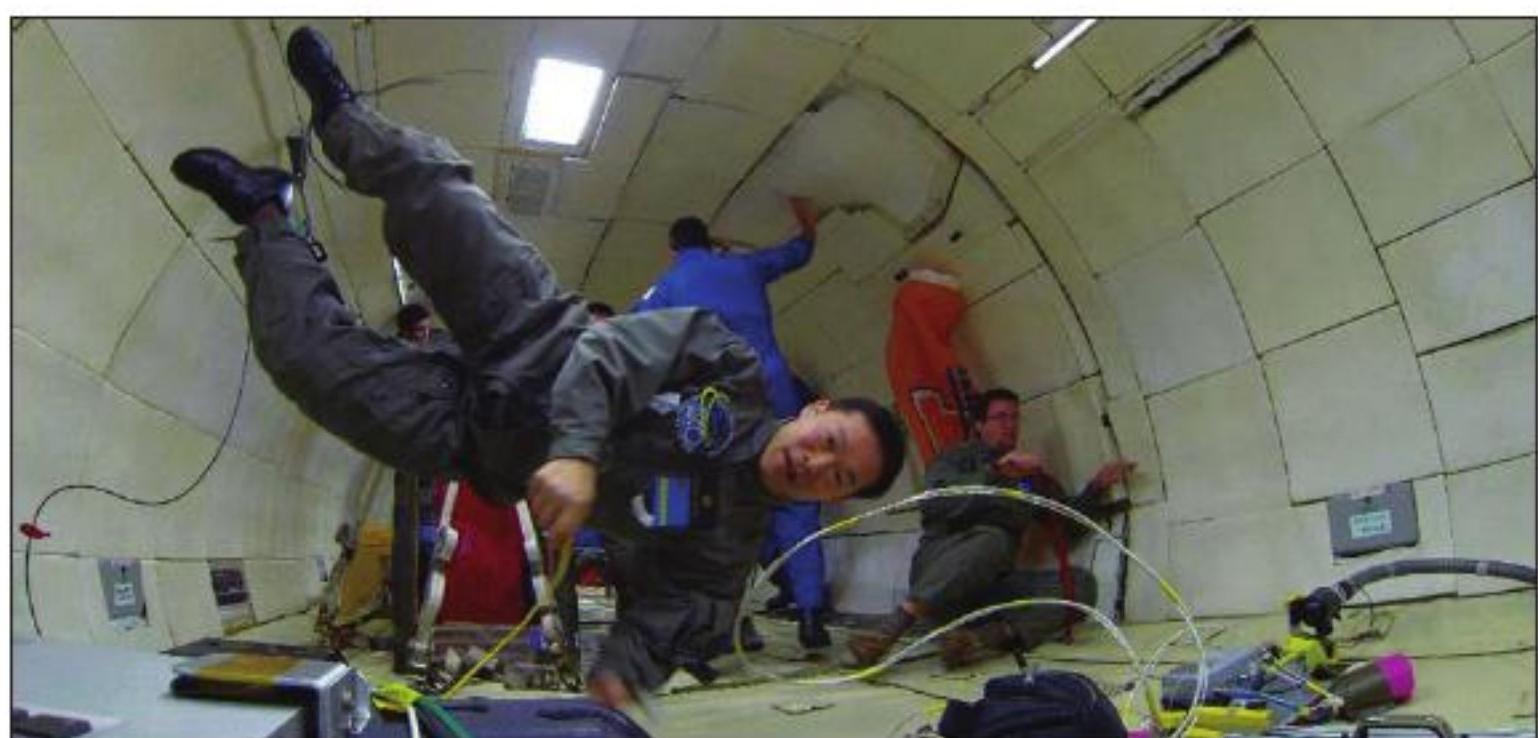
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## Dr. Edward Cheung, not leaving his Aruban flag behind



Aruban scientist, Edward Cheung, has recently completed an important phase in his most recent investigation



project for NASA. He is conducting tests for the maintenance of satellites in space with the assistance of robots that can repair and refuel them with combustible.

Remarkable is that Dr. Cheung uses every opportunity to give attention to Aruba during his work at NASA. If he is not taking pictures with the Aruban flag at his side, he names an invention after Aruba.

The government of Aruba continues to follow the developments of the career of this outstanding Aruban. One of the most outstanding recognitions granted Cheung was to name the center of innovation of the headquarters of TNO after him. Dr. Cheung is an inspiration to many other Aruban students, like Javier St. Jago studying engineering. Dr. Cheung holds a Ph.D. in Robotic Engineering and for more than 10 years was head of the Hubble Space Telescope Servicing Mission (HST). He is currently leader of the team of the Satellite Servicing Capability Office (SSCO) for NASA. They are developing

the means to extend the life of satellites in space with the assistance of robots that can repair and refuel them with combustible.

Whenever astronauts talk about a Cheung invention in space they mention it by name... Aruba! It is obvious

that Edward Cheung has never allowed Aruba to leave his mind and heart.

The zero gravity flights were the first that a team of space scientists shared with young students also interested in doing research." This week is filled with new experiences and incredible events. I can never forget this and hope to fly again in the future," said Dr. Cheung.

For more information and pictures of this project you can visit [www.edcheung.com](http://www.edcheung.com).

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### Bananas conceal massive cocaine find in Danish store

COPENHAGEN (AFP) - Staff at a Danish supermarket found a massive stash of 100 kilos (220 pounds) of cocaine in what was meant to be a shipment of bananas from Colombia, the second haul in a week, their employer said Wednesday.

Danish police said they were inquiring into the discovery of a "large amount of powder in a batch of bananas delivered to the Coop in Brondby," adding that analyses were needed to prove that it was cocaine.

"Like last week we have alerted our supplier in Colombia on this matter," Coop supermarkets spokesman Jens Juul Nielsen said.

"He was a bit perplexed about how this could have happened and he is working on tightening controls," the spokesman said as quoted on the paper's website.

He also told DR public television that there was no danger for purchasers of bananas as both the fruit and the cocaine were "very well wrapped."

## Minister Abath receives Dr. Serena Does at Aruba House



This past week, the Plenipotentiary Minister in the Hague, Edwin Abath, received a courtesy visit from Dr. Serena Croes who recently completed her doctoral studies at the University of Leiden. Serena Does studied social psychology. Also present for the visit of the psychologist were interim director of Aruba House, Shan-

dra John and head of the education department, Samuel Dumfries.

Serena's dissertation was titled: At the Heart of Egalitarianism. Dr. Does investigated how people can be motivated to create a society of equality in the treatment of people of different groups. As an example: how can Dutch people become more positive regarding social and economic progress of groups of other Dutch people such as Arubans, Surinamers and Turks. These are the topics that Dr. Does investigated during 4 years at the Social and Organizational department of psychology of the University of Leiden.

Dr. Does is an alumnus of

Colegio Arubano and in 2007 she graduated with honors as a psychologist from Leiden University. After graduation she began working at the university. Her work was published in different international scientific journals. Now that she has her Ph.D. she will move from Holland to the USA, where she will be offered a position as investigator at the prestigious department of Psychology of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).



Mr. Abath in name of the staff and personnel of Aruba House congratulated Serena Does with her doctorate and

new position at UCLA. We wish Serena all the success in the world in her new academic career. We're proud of you girl!

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# *Island dignitaries join the Philippine community on Aruba to celebrate 115 years of independence*

Continued from pg 1



**Honorary Philippine Consul Ami Henriquez Mendes and Minister Sevinger**

These were placed on behalf of the Philippine Consul to Aruba, the Philippine Embassy in Washington, The Government of Aruba, Parliament of Aruba, the Aruban Consulate of the Dominican Republic, and The United Filipino Community in Aruba, (UFILCOA) lead by Ricky de Peralta, who was the first speaker to the podium.

Mr. Peralta told the gathering that the immigrant Filipino community on Aruba considers themselves "blessed to have found a home on this island, a paradise." He also announced meetings between the two Filipino associations on Aruba to form a cooperative organization working for the welfare of their entire



community. Since the opening of the Hyatt Regency Resort in 1990, Filipinos have steadily migrated to Aruba, to become a substantial group within the island's population.

Following Mr. Peralta to the podium to address the gathering were Minister of Infrastructure, Immigration and Environment, Benny Sevinger, Assistance Director of the Department of Culture, Frank Croes and President of Parliament, Paul Croes. Each

Consul to Aruba, Ami Henriquez-Mendes. She declared they honor their heroes of 115 years past, who fought for independence from Spanish colonial rule. In doing so,

they courageously planted the roots of freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and a global partnership for peace and prosperity."

A beloved ritual of the Philippine Independence Day



celebration is the sharing of traditional aspects of the Filipino culture. Native song and particularly dances were enjoyed by those attending, as well as buffet of their native dishes.

This year, young Filipinos and Filipinas opened the morning's festivities by performing the Cuyo, a dance native to Mindinao. Dancers also treated the gathering to the Salimunday Tribal Dance and an Aray from Manila, a form of the Spanish *jota* accompanied by sprightly steps and the male dancers using castanets.

By Rosalie Klein



spoke of the enormous contributions made to the Aruban community by the Filipinos who have settled on the island in the realms of culture, commerce, professions such as nursing, and how their strong work ethic has set a fine example for their colleagues.

The formal part of the morning's celebrations were completed by an address by the Honorary Philippine

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## Sony pulls back curtain on new PS4 console

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Sony this week provided the world the first look at its new PlayStation 4 console, promising to combine its film, music, television and game strengths in a powerhouse home entertainment box.

Sony Computer Entertainment president Andrew House touted the next-generation videogame consoles as being built for the future while, at the same time, saying the company was remaining true to the new console's predecessor, the PlayStation 3.

"This is a completely new platform and, in many ways, represents a completely new PlayStation," House said during a press event here on the eve of the premier E3 videogame expo.

"We are more than ever capitalizing on the vast network of Sony divisions and the reputation of one of the biggest and most powerful entertainment brands in the world."

The PS4 will launch with beefed up offerings at the Sony Unlimited cloud-based movie and music services, as the console moves to expand into a complete home entertainment center while remaining true to hardcore gamers.

House said that PS4 will be available in the United States and Europe by the year-end holiday season for a price of \$399, £349 in Britain and 399 euros in Europe.

Microsoft will be hitting the market with a rival Xbox One console about the same time, but it will be priced higher at \$499 in the United States, £429 in Britain and 499 euros in Europe.

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## Herbal expert Orlando Clemencia returns to Aruba

A few months ago he was here and did a tremendous presentation to a sold-out audience in our Cas di Cultura. Due to time constraints he was unable to finish his presentation. But, he promised that on his next visit to Aruba he will complete his presentation.

That is exactly what he intends to do this time, as well as focus on natural remedies for curing cancer. Orlando Clemencia is a dedicated herbalist with a fascinating knowledge of hundreds of

herbs and natural products to cure numerous diseases and ailments. He is considered a connoisseur of natural remedies. Wherever he goes he always has a sold-out audience. He makes numerous presentations in Curacao. In his own words, he says... "all of my seminars are sold-out events, people want to know



what to use to cure their diseases instead of using conventional medicine, and I have the answers."

Orlando Clemencia will be presenting his seminar on herbs and natural cures on Friday, July 5th from 7:00pm in the Cas di Cultura. This is expected to be another one of his sold-out events here in

Aruba. Tickets are on sale at the following places:

Botica Santa Anna in Noord, Valero Caya Grandi, Valero Sta. Cruz and Valero Essoville in San Nicolaas. Those interested are urged to get their tickets early as only a certain amount of tickets have been printed. When they finish...that's it.

Orlando Clemencia will focus on the many natural cures available for curing cancer and other diseases. On the same night, Psychologist,

Tony Green will launch his new book:

Cura Bo Mes Di Cancer: Un Realidad si bo sa con!

The organizers have also informed us that there will be three door prizes at the close of the seminar. Each ticket will participate in the door prizes.

This is another seminar you don't want to miss, the information received is much too valuable not to have it. For any further information about the seminar you may call 568-7433.



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## Turkey PM floats referendum to end Istanbul park protest

ANKARA (AFP) - Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Wednesday said he would consider holding a referendum on plans to redevelop an Istanbul park that have sparked nationwide protests, in his first major concession in nearly two weeks of anti-government unrest.

The gesture came as thousands gathered in the city's Taksim Square, next to Gezi Park, for a 13th evening of

demonstrations. The mood was subdued and peaceful, in stark contrast to the previous night when protesters fought running battles with riot police.

A campaign to save Gezi Park's trees from being razed to make way for a replica of Ottoman-era military barracks was met with a heavy-handed police response on May 31. The crackdown sparked a countrywide outpouring of anger against Erdogan, seen as increasingly

authoritarian.

Erdogan has faced international condemnation over his handling of the crisis, which has left four dead and injured nearly 5,000 demonstrators, tarnishing Turkey's image as a model of Islamic democracy.

The premier has repeatedly warned that he was running out of patience with the demonstrators, but he held out on olive branch by meeting with some of the protest representatives.

## Colorado fires destroy homes, thousands evacuated

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Forest fires raged Wednesday across the western US state of Colorado, destroying dozens of houses and forcing the evacuation of thousands of residents.

High temperatures, dry conditions and strong winds have fanned the flames. The worst of the blazes -- the Black Forest Fire -- had as of Tuesday destroyed more than 3,200 hectares (7,900 acres) of land near Colorado Springs.

More than 900 inmates in a correctional facility near the city, the second largest in the state, had to be transferred to another prison.

About 150 firefighters were battling the flames on Wednesday, backed up by 48 helicopters and members of the National Guard.

"This fire spread very rapidly yesterday and moved

through areas very quickly and consumed a lot of land," El Paso County Sheriff Terry Maketa told a press conference Wednesday.

"Today, we're going to be focusing a lot on at least cutting some fire lines," Maketa said, adding that nearly 100 homes had been destroyed.

So far, no one had been reported missing, but the sheriff expressed concern about "those locations where people did not evacuate. One of my worst fears is that people took their chances and it may have cost them their life."

Among the other major fires threatening the state, the Royal Gorge Fire, which was less than 10 percent contained on Wednesday, had already consumed more than 1,500 hectares, according to the forest fire website Inciweb.

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## International News

### US surveillance foiled 'dozens' of attacks: NSA

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Secret US surveillance has thwarted dozens of potential attacks, the head of the National Security Agency said Wednesday as he defended his agency after leaks revealed hidden programs.

"It's classified, but it's dozens of terrorist events that these have helped prevent," NSA chief General Keith Alexander told lawmakers as he was questioned on the importance of Internet and phone surveillance efforts.

Alexander said the attacks foiled included "dozens for both here and abroad, in disrupting or contributing to the disruption of terrorist attacks."

Appearing at a congressional hearing, Alexander said his agency was working to provide

more data to lawmakers and the public. "I want the American people to know that we're being transparent in here," he said.

He maintained that the agency needs "reasonable articulable suspicion" before it gets a warrant to look more closely at data.

Alexander said that when the NSA seeks specific phone data, "that it is auditable by the (congressional) committees, by the courts, by the administration."

Asked whether NSA could determine what people are looking for on the search engine Google, he said: "Yes we could. You could get a court order... to do any kind of search in this area, you would need a court order."

### Ecuador to vote controversial media law

QUITO (AFP) - Ecuador's Congress is set to vote Friday on a communications bill that will sharply reduce the private media's allotment of the country's airwaves over opposition protests.

The law was proposed by President Rafael Correa whose ruling party gained absolute majority in the Congress in

May 14 elections.

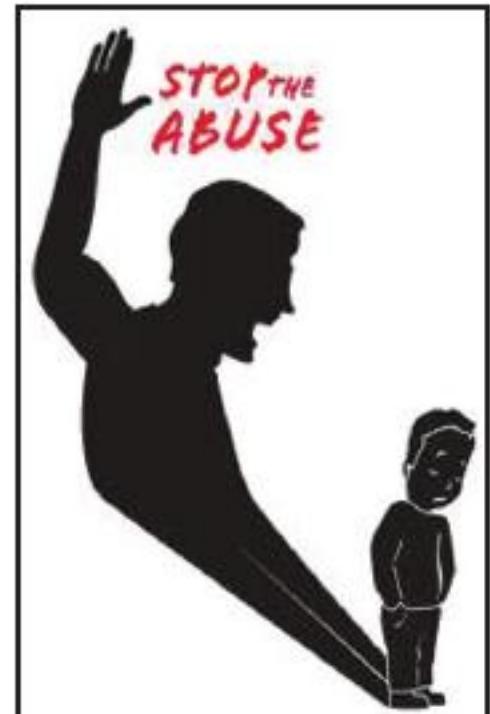
An attempt to pass the bill last year failed for a lack of a quorum amid opposition charges that the overhaul will institute a mechanism for censoring the private media, which has clashed repeatedly with the leftist Correa.

The measure will redistribute airwaves, reducing private media's share to a third from 85 percent in radio and 71 percent in television.

Under the bill, a 33 percent share will go to state media and another 33 percent to community radio and television.

The bill also would set up a new regulatory body with power to sanction and fine companies that refuse to correct published information.

In the past, Correa has responded to negative coverage by suing Ecuadoran news organizations and journalists under the country's slander laws.



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### Pope admits 'gay lobby' in Vatican administration: report

VATICAN CITY (AFP) - Pope Francis has admitted the existence of a "gay lobby" inside the Vatican's secretive administration, the Roman Curia, allegedly exposed during a leaks scandal, according to a Latin American Catholic website.

Back in February Italian media claimed that a secret report by cardinals investigating the leaks included allegations of corruption and blackmail attempts against gay Vatican clergymen, and on the other hand, favouritism based on gay relationships.

"In the Curia, there are truly some saints, but there is also a current of corruption," the pope is quoted as having said during an audience last week with CLAR (the Latin American and Caribbean Confederation of Religious Men and Women).

"There is talk of a 'gay lobby' and it's true, it exists. We have to see what can be done," the

76-year-old pontiff is quoted as saying on the Reflection and Liberation website, which was flagged up by religious news agencies.

The secret report compiled

by a committee of three cardinals for the pope's eyes only was the result of a broad inquiry into leaks of secret Vatican papers last year -- a scandal known as "Vatileaks".

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## Health & Living

### US girl in surgery for lung transplant

WASHINGTON (AFP) - A 10-year-old American girl whose dire need for a lung transplant catapulted her into the political spotlight underwent surgery Wednesday after a donor was found.

"God is great! He moved the mountain! Sarah got THE CALL," wrote Janet Ruddock Murnaghan on her Facebook page.

The Pennsylvania girl, who is critically ill with cystic fibrosis and was said to be near death's door without a transplant, entered surgery early Wednesday, her mother said.

The case drew international attention when the child's family gave interviews to cable news networks and pleaded with the US government to bend the rules and allow her to be put on the list for an adult lung transplant.

She was at the top of a waiting list for children under 12, but pediatric donor lungs are far rarer than those from adults, and experts had given Sarah only a few weeks to live if doctors did not perform a transplant.

It was unclear whether the donated organs, which arrived late Tuesday, came from an adult or a child.

"Today is the start of Sarah's new beginning and new life!" her mother wrote.

The Children's Hospital of

Philadelphia declined to share any details about the surgery, citing patient privacy.

Last week, a US judge took the unusual step of ordering that the child should be placed on an adult waiting list, after Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius declined to intervene and the family filed a lawsuit, alleging that current US standards discriminated against children.

A change.org petition by the girl's family and friends appealing for new donor policy regarding children in need of transplants drew more than 372,000 supporters.

The practice of transplanting adult organs into children is relatively rare.

According to government data, just one lung transplant has occurred in the United States since 2007 involving a donor older than 18 and a recipient younger than 12.

On Monday, the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network agreed to revise its policy on transplant candidates 11 and under, which previously stated that children may only be considered for adult lungs if there were no other suitable candidates.

As of June 10, there were 1,659 candidates listed for a lung transplant nationwide, of whom 30 were under age 10.

### H1N1 flu cases up sharply in Venezuela

CARACAS (AFP) - The number of H1N1 swine flu cases rose sharply in Venezuela during the last week of May, the health ministry said Wednesday, refusing to disclose whether any deaths have been linked to the outbreak.

Health Minister Isabel Iturria, explaining why deaths would not be reported, blamed "political or economic interests" for creating alarm over the outbreak.

The ministry said there were 414 new cases of H1N1 in the week from May 26 to June 1, pushing the total number of cases from 724 to 1,138.

The virus was detected for the first time in Venezuela in 2009.

The current outbreak has surpassed one in 2011 that resulted in 900 cases and eight deaths.

Venezuela has been fiercely polarized since Nicolas Maduro was declared the winner of a disputed election in April to replace his mentor, the late leftist leader Hugo Chavez. The centrist opposition has contested the results.

## Cucumber Juice



-- Cucumber can be juiced along with its skin and seeds. Before juicing it with the skin on it requires that it be washed thoroughly to remove its pesticides residues. Cucumber juice is very low in calories, is free from fat or cholesterol. Cucumber juice rather than cucumber gives immediate benefits as the nutrients are readily available being in liquid form. If needed mint and honey can be added for not only a twist in flavor and taste but getting the added health benefits these two provide. Cucumber juice is great for hydrating the body as well as flushing out toxins from the body as the juice is diuretic in action and is mainly water. The dietary fiber aids in digestion and controls weight. It also helps in normalizing bowel movements and preventing constipation. The lignans in cucumber juice reduce the risk of cancers of the ovary, uterus, prostate and ovary. The cucurbitacins which are plentiful in cucumber juice also prevent development of cancer cells.

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**Sci-Tech****Study finds speech-to-text risks behind the wheel**

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Speech-to-text devices in new cars fail to overcome the well-known perils of hands-on texting while driving, a US study suggests.

Developing standards for measuring cognitive distraction behind the wheel, University of Utah researchers wired the heads of 32 drivers with sensors, then gave them an array of tests in vehicle simulators and real automobiles.

While the research is ongoing, early findings suggest that sending texts with a hands-free voice recognition system -- a feature in many new vehicles -- was more distractible than listening to the radio or conversing with passengers.

"This clearly suggests that the adoption of voice-based systems in the vehicle may have unintended consequences that adversely affect traffic safety," said the study, sponsored by the non-profit AAA Foundation.

"Just because a new technology does not take the eyes off the road does not make it safe to be used while the vehicle is in motion."

The 12 men and 20 women who participated in the study

ranged in age from 18 to 33. All had clean driving records -- and all confessed to regularly using their cell phones while driving.

In a report last year, the National Safety Council estimated that 24 percent of all motor vehicle crashes in the United States involve cell phone use, despite bans in several states that are openly flaunted by many motorists.

The Consumer Electronics Association, an industry group, disputed the University of Utah research, saying it suffered from "a number of methodology flaws" that called its findings into question.

"This study could hardly be considered naturalistic as it relied on young drivers in unfamiliar cars, wearing a type of helmet and driving on a defined course when compared to studies which track real drivers in real situations," it said in a statement.

It cited another "truly naturalistic" study by Virginia Tech for the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration that determined that hands-free, voice-activated devices posed "no increased safety risk."

**Britain to push G8 for action against 'superbugs'**

LONDON (AFP) - Britain will urge the G8 to coordinate plans to prevent a spread of drug-resistant microbes, which it fears could cause a public health crisis, the government said.

Science Minister David Willetts said Britain would call for a joint clamp down on the over-prescription of antibiotics and for cross-border cooperation in fighting the spread of bacterial diseases at next week's G8 summit in Northern Ireland.

"Across the G8, we should regard the spread of antibiotic resistance as a global challenge that is up there with climate change, water stress and environmental damage, and there are genuine policy consequences that follow from that," Willetts told the Guardian.

He is hoping to forge agreements over the use of antibiotics on farms and strengthen international monitoring of emerging resistant strains.

Leaders of the world's richest economies including US and Russian presidents Barack Obama and Vladimir Putin are due to meet at the Lough Erne luxury golf resort in Northern Ireland on June 17-18.

**Germany begins to count cost as floods surge north**

BERLIN (AFP) - Deadly floods forging a path of devastation through central Europe for more than a week bore down on northern Germany Tuesday as new estimates emerged on the cost of the damage. Swollen rivers in the German states of Saxony-Anhalt and Schleswig-Holstein posed the biggest threat, after flood waters that left at least 19 people dead across Europe. Europe's top economic power has published no official figure on the cost of the deluge but a private ratings agency said the figure could surpass 12 billion euros (\$16 billion) in Germany alone. The German Agricultural Association said sodden fields, destroyed crops and damaged equipment brought losses of 405 million euros, according to a preliminary estimate published. Around 305,000 hectares (750,000 acres) of fertile farmland were submerged as the floodwaters worked their way north, with Saxony-Anhalt in the centre of the country seeing about one-third of the total damage. In Schleswig-Holstein in the north, fears focused on the town of Lauenburg, 40 kilometres (25 miles) southeast of Hamburg, where the Elbe was expected to peak on today.

**The flying bike**

PRAGUE : A picture taken yesterday at the hall of Letnany fairground in Prague the flying bike, a unique construction of Czech designers and modern technology of French company "Dessault Systemes - 3D software tools". This bike flies thanks to six futuristic horizontal propellers and an electric motor. Yesterday the bike with a dummy took off for a couple of minutes

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## FINANCE

### **Oil prices rise despite higher US crude stocks**

LONDON (AFP) - Global oil prices advanced on Wednesday despite news that US oil inventories rose unexpectedly last week, dealers said.

Brent North Sea crude for delivery in July added 76 cents to stand at \$103.72 per barrel in late afternoon London deals.

New York's main contract, West Texas Intermediate (WTI) light sweet crude for July, gained 77 cents to \$96.15 a barrel.

The US government's Energy Information Administration (EIA) revealed Wednesday that crude inventories rose by 2.5 million barrels in the week ending June 7.

That surprised the market because expectations had been for a modest decline of 400,000 barrels, according to analysts polled by Dow Jones Newswires.

The EIA added that US gasoline or petrol reserves climbed by 2.7 million barrels.

Stocks of distillate, include heating oil and diesel, fell by 1.2 million barrels.

The report is a key focus for the oil market because the United States is the world's number one crude consuming nation.

In earlier deals on Wednesday, the oil market had diverged after a gloomy demand forecast downgrade from the International Energy Agency.

The Paris-based IEA trimmed its forecast for oil consumption, arguing that sluggish global economic growth was crimping demand for oil, including in emerging market powerhouse China.

The IEA predicted that oil demand would expand by 785,000 barrels per day this year to 90.6 million barrels per day (mbpd).

The OPEC oil cartel estimated 2013 global demand at 89.65 million barrels per day, down a notch from its prior forecast of 89.66 mbpd.

### **CEOs a bit more upbeat about US economy: survey**

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Chief executives of top US companies are slightly more upbeat about the nation's economic outlook but say political uncertainties are cramping growth, according to a survey released Tuesday.

The Business Roundtable's second-quarter 2013 CEO Economic Outlook Survey showed the business leaders expect a minor improvement in economic output over the next six months, with modestly brighter expectations for sales and hiring offsetting a decline in capital investment.

CEOs expected the economy to grow at a 2.2 percent pace, edging up from 2.1 percent seen in the first-quarter survey, said the pro-business lobby.

"Overall, CEOs see the US economy still on a slow road to recovery," said Jim McNerney, the head of aerospace giant Boeing.

### **Low interest rate a challenge for insurers: US Treasury**

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Sustained low interest rates by the US Federal Reserve could affect the profitability of the American insurance sector, a report by the US Treasury Department said Wednesday.

In 2012, as it continued to crawl out from the financial crisis, the life and health insurance sector posted a record net premiums of \$645 billion, and property-casualty insurance firms counted \$460 billion in new premiums, according to the report.

Despite weak interest rates that hurt investment returns and catastrophe losses hitting \$43 billion, the life sector reported net income of \$40.9 billion last year compared with \$14.4 billion in 2011, and net gains by casualty firms rose to \$37.3 billion from \$20.1 billion.



These gains though could be hurt by the extension of the Fed's ultra-low rate policy, or, on the other hand, by a sudden and sharp rate increase, the Treasury report said.

To spur the economy, the Fed has held its principal rate at 0-0.25 percent since the end of 2008, and through its quantitative-easing program has maintained downward pressure on longer term rates.

"The prospect of continued low interest rates for a prolonged period poses a challenge to insurers seeking to balance investment risks and returns," the report said.

Eventually the Fed will have to increase its rates, and that, too, poses risks for insurers.

"While insurers would ben-

efit from an increase in interest rates through improved investment returns, a sudden, significant rate increase could present threats," the report said.

A sudden rise would increase unrealized losses in insurers' fixed-income investments, for one.

At the same time, it could encourage policyholders to look for higher yields elsewhere, which could hurt the insurers' premiums and force them to liquidate investments to make payouts to departing policyholders.

Wednesday's report is the first of its kind by the Federal Insurance Office, which was established under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act that was signed into law in 2010 in the wake of the US financial meltdown.

The report said that, according to preliminary estimates, 2012 should be the third-largest year in terms of catastrophe losses incurred. Losses could total \$43 billion, due in large part to natural disasters like Hurricane Sandy.

### **YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer**



<b>Daily Exchange Rates</b>				
Current as of: 06/12/2013	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80
Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.00	100.20
Canada	CAD	1.77	1.79	1.77
Britain	GBP	2.80	2.85	2.83
Switzerland	CHF	191.71	192.43	193.26
Netherlands	EUR	230.59	232.69	238.85
Sweden	SEK	25.91	26.63	27.78
Denmark	DKK	30.23	30.95	32.27
Norway	NOK	30.67	31.39	31.41
Japan	JPY	214.88	216.84	186.16
(per 10,000)				
All rates for amounts up to AWG 100,00 per item.				

# Spend a fun evening with friends at Barney's

A few months ago, Palm Beach welcomed a cozy new place that offers good food, great prices and a uniquely warm, welcoming ambiance that makes patrons feel as if they are visiting with friends rather than just eating out. Even the name, "Barney's", which was inspired by Barney Rubble of the Flintstones, is an expression of the good humor of its owners and your hosts, Ron and Elina.

Ron and Elina have a very congenial division of labor; he enjoys being bartender and playing around with his "cocktail of the day" while she sees to it that everyone is well satisfied with their meal. Chef Jan is in the kitchen doing his magic; patrons praise their spicy Firecracker Shrimp appetizer and mushrooms stuffed with escargot, priced at \$9.50 and \$8.50, or the Smoked Trout Fillet for a real gourmet treat.

They are particularly popular for their "Build Your Own Barney Burger" using specially imported organic beef



*A place where you feel like you are with friends*

from Holland, guaranteed to have been raised without steroids or antibiotics, only \$9.50 with fries and coleslaw. Patrons are handed a special hamburger checklist, which features a full menu of toppings, sauces and cheeses to customize your order to create the ideal burger. One can also opt for a second or third ham-

burger patty for a very nominal cost. High end items on the menu, such as the Seafood Pasta, are only \$20.50. They also have a kid's menu with favorites such as a Kid's Burger, chicken fingers and Mac & Cheese; most items are only \$4. One regular described the place as particu-

larly "kid-friendly," with Elina, a mother herself, having devised a number of methods to keep young ones entertained. The menu has a range to please patrons who are in the mood for something simple while others can be indulgent gourmands.

Tuesday through Saturday evenings they have specialty

nights at bargain rates. Tuesday is Schnitzel Night, with a choice five different kinds of schnitzel with sauces and toppings, only \$17.50. Wednesday is fresh grouper, prepared any of five ways, with veggies and side dish, \$19.50. Thursday enjoy unlimited ribs done three ways honey, smoked or BBQ, for \$17.50 with salad, slaw and fries. Saturday means endless rib eye steak with coleslaw and fries for \$19.50. Friday evening ends the work week with Karaoke Night, a convivial and fun evening when islanders kick back and let loose their inner rock star.

Barney's is located just next to the huge supermarket on the Palm Beach/Noord road, not far from the gas station. They are open from 5:00 to 11:00 PM and closed on Mondays. Check out their full menu at <http://www.barnesaruba.com> or call 586-5420 for reservations and directions.

## Coffee shop chaos as Dutch city flouts drug tourist ban

MAASTRICHT (AFP) - Authorities in the Dutch drug tourism hub of Maastricht are striking back after cannabis cafes staged an open revolt by selling marijuana to foreigners in defiance of a controversial ban.

The battle has been fought on the streets, in the courtroom and in the media as authorities struggle to enforce a law aimed at ridding the streets of stoned tourists, with foreigners previously accounting for two-thirds of the coffee shops' clientele.

Coffee shops in Maastricht, a Roman city of 120,000 conveniently wedged between the borders of Belgium and Germany, were emboldened following a court ruling on April 25 that city authorities should not have ordered the closure of one of its best-known hangouts for getting high.

The Easy Going was ordered shut last year after it was caught selling to tourists.

Members of the Maastricht Coffee Shop Association (VOCM) comprising 13 of the city's 14 coffee shops resumed selling to tourists in May.

But police raids, seizures, closure orders and prosecutions followed, and after the latest police bust at four coffee



*with variation*

shops last weekend, all 13 VOCM member have now shut up shop.

At the root of the chaos is a controversial law introduced in May 2012 requiring coffee shops to cater only for Dutch residents in the hope of addressing the downsides of drug tourism -- traffic jams, street dealing and rowdy late-night partying.

But a new, more left-wing government said in November that individual city authorities could decide whether to apply the law affecting some 650 establishments nationwide, according to their economic or social priorities.

Most Dutch cities, including those in Amsterdam, said

they did not want to apply the law, while Maastricht and other southern cities said they would do so.

Eight coffee shop owners and employees are due in court on June 12 for having sold drugs to non-residents, with more prosecutions expected to follow.

Maastricht's coffee shops are waiting impatiently for the outcome of those cases, hoping for a clear legal precedent.

Last week, police busted four clubs -- Maxcy's, the Missouri, Club 69 and Lucky Time -- and arrested four staff members as well as confiscating their merchandise, Dutch news agency ANP reported.

A 14th coffee shop, which

is not part of the VOCM, remained open.

Before being shut down, the VOCM had said it did not want to "discriminate" and indeed would lose too much business by complying with the law, since foreigners account for 65 percent of their clientele.

"This business of closures is a big joke, they're playing the victim," Maastricht city council spokesman Gertjan Bos told AFP. "The coffee shops are clever."

But VOCM head Marc Josemans said: "If governments in neighbouring countries took responsibility in terms of soft drugs, none of this would be necessary."

He declined to discuss the matter further.

City spokesman Bos said that the new law had slashed the number of drug tourists coming to Maastricht from 1.5 million to under 400,000 a year.

But he admits that the number of illegal street dealers has not gone down and that they are selling more aggressively than before. The VOCM says the number of street dealers has gone up.

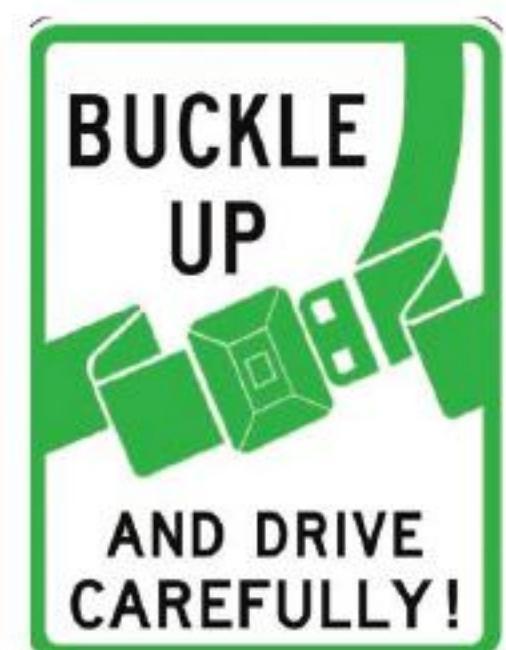
"We can't prove it but we think that some street dealers

are employed by coffee shops themselves," to undermine the law, Bos said.

A stroll along the Maas river that snakes through the ancient city will bring the visitor in contact with hordes of street dealers touting "good weed".

As a result, the police presence has been ramped up while city authorities are now looking into moving around half of Maastricht's coffee shops outside the city.

If the oft-mooted plan goes ahead, city coffee shops will remain off limits for foreigners, while those outside of town will welcome them, effectively creating a new phenomenon: cannabis ghettos.



# Chef's Table, "A hidden gem" close to both Palm and Eagle Beach resorts



--Tucked away down the main Bubali Road, just a mile from the Super Food market is one of Aruba's most charming eateries, known for fine food and exceptional surrounding. Chef's Table has been described by loyal patrons as "a hidden gem," and the attention to quality by the amiable staff will prompt the new visitor to agree.

Delightful decorations of original art set the mood in this converted landmark



country home, divided into several cozy rooms. There is also the choice of dining al fresco in the central gardens, one of the great options of eating out on Aruba.

A gourmet menu includes such unique items as an individual Mediterranean Fish Pot, served with pasta, or a creative sauce for the very fresh catch of the day. Guest particularly rave about their



"Surf & Turf" of lobster and filet mignon, uniquely marinated duck breast, and "Black & White Sesame Tuna" served with a Lemon-Zucchini Risotto.

Chef's Table is one of those few restaurants you can count on to be open both Sunday and Monday, as Wednesday is their day off. Don't miss the opportunity to



try this moderately priced, gourmet treat in most pleasant surroundings, and save just a tad of room for their famous "tapas" style desserts, offering a shot glass of sweet ness, the perfect end to a delectable meal and most pleasant evening. Visit their website <http://www.chefstablearuba.com/> to meet Chef Martin and the crew.

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These fabulous loft apartments are more spacious, with the sleeping area upstairs on the loft. All apartments are completely furnished with cable TV. The open kitchen is very spacious

and equipped with stove top, refrigerator, toaster/oven and coffee maker (microwave optional). The apartments are air-conditioned, with daily maid service, private parking and a mini market.

The laundry is accessible to all guests 24 hours a day. There is a large fresh water swimming pool, with a pool deck and beach chairs, where you can relax any time of the day. At the reception, the friendly staff is always ready to attend you with a smile.

Quality Apartments is situated at the Schotlandstraat 70 in Oranjestad. For reservations or information readers may call at tel: (297)-582-0697 or (297)-583-7484, Fax: (297)-583-5203. Office hours are Monday thru Friday: 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., on Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Website: <http://arubaqualityapartments.com>

## Looted Cambodian sculptures return home from US



PHNOM PENH (AFP) - Two 10th century statues that Cambodia says were looted from a jungle temple several decades ago returned home on Tuesday from New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, in what the kingdom described as a "historic" moment. The Met announced in May that the Khmer sculptures, known as the "Kneeling Attendants", would be sent back after 20 years on display in its Asian Wing. Seven Buddhist monks chanted blessings for the life-size statues during a religious ceremony attended by officials from the government and the Met at the airport. "The return of the statues is a historic event for us," Hab Touch, director general at the Ministry of Culture, told AFP. He voiced hope that more looted Cambodian sculptures would be returned from foreign countries. The two statues were stolen from the Koh Ker temple site, 80 kilometres (50 miles) northeast of Cambodia's famed Angkor Wat complex, in the early 1970s, he added. At the time the country was in the midst of a brutal civil war and looting was rampant. They were donated piece by piece to the Metropolitan Museum in the late 1980s and 1990s and were considered legal. However, the Met said last month that it had come into possession of new documentary research that supported Cambodia's claim. The sculptures will be put on display at the Peace Palace in Phnom Penh during the 37th meeting of UNESCO's world heritage committee which starts on Sunday, government spokesman Ek Tha told AFP.

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## SPORTS

### Football: Nigeria qualification put on hold after draw

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) - Nigeria failed Wednesday to reach the final round of 2014 World Cup qualifiers in Africa after a 1-1 draw in Namibia.

The African champions needed a win in Windhoek to take an unassailable four-point Group F lead with one game to spare.

But the 'Super Eagles' had to settle for a point when Godfrey Oboabona equalised seven minutes from time at Sam Nujoma Stadium.

Deon Hotto Kavendji had put the 'Brave Warriors' ahead on 77 minutes as they threatened to avenge a 1-0 loss in Calabar last June.

Nigeria have nine points

after five rounds, Malawi seven, Namibia five and Kenya prop up the table with no wins and just three points.

So the September clash of Nigeria and Malawi becomes a group decider with the 'Eagles' needing a draw and the 'Flames' a win to finish on top.

Nigeria now switch attention to the Confederations Cup in Brazil -- they face Tahiti on June 17 in Group B followed by Uruguay and world champions Spain.

Malawi were held 2-2 by Kenya in Blantyre earlier Wednesday -- a result which opened the door for Nigeria to seal first place.

### Football: US beat Panama to seize CONCACAF lead



- SEATTLE (AFP) - Jozy Altidore scored his third goal in three matches Tuesday to help the United States to a 2-0 victory over Panama and into the lead in 2014 World Cup qualifying in North America.
- Altidore gave the hosts a 1-0 lead in the 36th minute, and Eddie Johnson, who plays for the hometown Seattle Sounders, made it 2-0 in the

53rd as Jurgen Klinsmann's men moved to the top of the standings on 10 points in the six-nation final qualifying round for next year's World Cup in Brazil.

The United States are two points clear of Costa Rica and Mexico, who played to a goalless draw at Azteca stadium in Mexico City.

It was another uninspiring performance from Mexico, long a regional powerhouse in North and Central America and the Caribbean.

They have just one victory in the final round of qualifying and five draws -- four of them scoreless.

Although their eight points are the same as Costa Rica's, they have played one more match.

Honduras vaulted over Panama and into fourth place

on seven points with a 2-0 victory over Jamaica in Tegucigalpa.

Goals from Oscar Garcia in the 10th minute and Roger Rojas in the 88th got the job done for Honduras.

Jamaica, who remain without a victory in the final round of qualifying, were reduced to 10 men in the 76th minute when Adrian Mariappa was sent off.

The top three teams from the region will advance directly to the World Cup in Brazil, while the fourth-placed team will play New Zealand for a berth.

Mexico, meanwhile, again struggled to create any real scoring opportunities despite long stretches of possession.

Fans in the less-than-capacity crowd at Azteca were booing the home side by halftime.

By the end of the match, fans were calling for the ouster of Mexico manager Juan Manuel "Chepo" de la Torre.

Mexico heads this week to the Confederations Cup in Brazil with questions hanging over them.

The United States, meanwhile, continues their qualifying campaign by hosting Honduras next Tuesday, while Costa Rica plays at home against Panama.

### Australian McCardel attempts Cuba-Florida swim

HAVANA (AFP) - Australian Chloe McCardel on Wednesday became the latest swimmer to attempt to cross from Cuba to the US state of Florida, during which she will have to brave strong currents, jellyfish and sharks. The 29-year-old, who will be attempting the feat without a shark cage, flippers or wetsuit, plunged into the sea at Havana's Marina Hemingway at 10:00 am (1400 GMT) at the start of a 170-kilometer (100-mile) swim. She has said she hopes to complete the swim in around 60 hours. "The team is pumped. The water is flat. The winds are calm. The currents are pushing towards Key West. 10:00 Start. It's GO TIME PEOPLE!" organizers tweeted. Her team later tweeted an hour into the crossing that "seas are calm, skies are clear." McCardel, who was awarded the Channel Swimming Association's Sotiraki Cup in both 2011 and 2012, said she hoped to set a world record and draw attention to the decades-long political divide between the United States and communist Cuba. She is also raising money for cancer charities, after her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer when the swimmer was 14. McCardel said she would cover her body in a type of grease to protect herself from sun and cold and would be fed every 30 minutes with a special liquid nutrition drink with vitamins and minerals. If she can hold out and make the crossing, McCardel will hold a new record in unassisted nonstop distance swimming, breaking the record set by fellow Australian Penny Palfrey, who failed in an attempt last year to swim across the same strait.



protect herself from sun and cold and would be fed every 30 minutes with a special liquid nutrition drink with vitamins and minerals. If she can hold out and make the crossing, McCardel will hold a new record in unassisted nonstop distance swimming, breaking the record set by fellow Australian Penny Palfrey, who failed in an attempt last year to swim across the same strait.



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## World Cup's countdown clock unveiled in Rio

RIO DE JANEIRO (AFP) - A clock designed by the late architect Oscar Niemeyer to mark the one-year countdown to next year's World Cup was unveiled on Rio's Copacabana beach Wednesday in the presence of soccer legend Pele.

The device, made by Hublot, the official timekeeper for the 2014 finals, displayed the time remaining until Brazil gets to stage its first World Cup since 1950 when it lost in the final to Uruguay.

"We are going to stage an excellent World Cup, we are confident," said Pele, the country's ambassador for the World Cup.

Joining Pele, a three-time winner of the World Cup, at



the ceremony were Brazilian Sports Minister Also Rebelo, Jerome Valcke, the secretary general of world football's governing body FIFA, Rio Mayor Eduardo Paes and Hublot President Jean-Claude Biver.

Jose Maria Marin, chairman of the Cup's Local Organising Committee, hailed the unveiling as "another memorable milestone in our preparations for Brazil 2014."

Current FIFA president Sepp Blatter could not attend but sent a message saying he was "extremely pleased".

Brazil "is not only a footballing powerhouse, but an economic one too. I'm sure that one of the legacies of this FIFA World Cup will be that of helping Brazil become a leader in terms of social and cultural values," he added.

The clock unveiling came three days before the start of the Confederations Cup, a two-week tournament to be contested by eight countries -- Brazil, Spain, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, Tahiti and Uruguay -- as a dress rehearsal for next year's World Cup.

Brazil will face Japan in the opening game in Brasilia on Saturday.

"I hope not to have the same experience I had when I was nine in 1950 and saw my father crying in front of the radio," Pele said, referring to Brazil's humiliating defeat to Uruguay in the Cup final that

year. The clock's features were designed by Niemeyer, a Brazilian icon who passed away last year at the age of 104.

• • • • •



vs.



NBA FINALS

Game 1: SAS 92, MIA 88 (Spurs lead 1-0)

Game 2: MIA 103, SAS 84 (Series tied 1-1)

Game 3: SAS 113, MIA 77 (Spurs lead 2-1)

Game 4: Jun 13 - 9 pm EDT @SAS

Game 5: Jun 16 - 8 pm EDT @SAS

Game 6: Jun 18 - 9 pm EDT @MIA

Game 7: Jun 20 - 9 pm EDT @MIA

(Series best-of-seven)

## Golf: Storm could dampen thrill of Open's top-three group

ARDMORE (AFP) - US Open organizers put Tiger Woods, Rory McIlroy and Adam Scott -- the world's three top-ranked golfers -- together on the first two days to create an electric atmosphere at Merion.

But a severe thunderstorm predicted to hit today afternoon could bring more lightning than the US Golf Association (USGA) really wanted to see when world number one Woods, McIlroy and Scott tee off at 1:14 p.m.

A course that has already soaked up 6.5 inches of rain in four days has enjoyed two dry practice days but forecasters expect up to three inches of rain on Thursday with severe conditions including a flash flood watch.

The course figures to be jammed with spectators watching the feature trio of 14-time major champion Woods, seeking his first major crown since the 2008 US Open, second-ranked McIlroy, the 2011 US Open winner, and third-ranked Adam Scott, the reigning

Masters champion from Australia.

US veteran Steve Stricker warned that mudballs could decide a winner and 2010 US Open champion Graeme McDowell echoed that notion.

Woods, chasing the all-time record 18 majors won by Jack Nicklaus, seeks a fourth US Open crown after 2000, 2002 and 2008 titles to match the all-time record shared by Nicklaus, Hogan, Jones and Willie Anderson.

### MLB Standings

#### American League

East	W	L	Pct	GB
BOSTON	40	26	.606	—
YANKEES	37	27	.578	2.0
BALTIMORE	37	29	.561	3.0
TAMPA	35	29	.547	4.0
TORONTO	28	36	.438	11.0

East	W	L	Pct	GB
ATLANTA	39	26	.600	—
WASHINGTON	31	32	.492	7.0
PHILADELPHIA	31	34	.477	8.0
NY METS	23	36	.390	13.0
MIAMI	19	45	.297	19.5

Central	W	L	Pct	GB
DETROIT	36	27	.571	—
CLEVELAND	31	33	.484	5.5
KANSAS	29	33	.468	6.5
MINNESOTA	28	33	.459	7.0
CHICAGO	28	35	.444	8.0

Central	W	L	Pct	GB
ST. LOUIS	42	22	.656	—
CINCINNATI	40	26	.606	3.0
PITTSBURGH	38	26	.594	4.0
MILWAUKEE	26	38	.406	16.0
CHICAGO	25	38	.397	16.5

West	W	L	Pct	GB
TEXAS	38	26	.594	—
OAKLAND	39	27	.591	—
SEATTLE	29	37	.439	10.0
LA ANGELES	28	38	.424	11.0
HOUSTON	22	44	.333	17.0

West	W	L	Pct	GB
ARIZONA	36	29	.554	—
COLORADO	35	30	.538	1.0
SAN FRANCISCO	33	30	.524	2.0
SAN DIEGO	31	34	.477	5.0
DODGERS	28	36	.438	7.5

x-Clinched Playoff Spot; y-Division Champ

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## NBA: Spurs stun Heat to take 2-1 series lead



LeBron James #6 of the Miami Heat grabs a rebound against the San Antonio Spurs during Game Three

SAN ANTONIO (AFP) - Payback for the Miami Heat came in the form of a good ol' butt-kicking by the San Antonio Spurs.

They do things bigger in Texas, and that includes bounce-back wins as the Spurs responded to being embarrassed by the Heat in game two with one of the biggest blowouts in NBA finals history in game three on Tuesday.

"You don't expect it to go the way it did," said Spurs superstar Tim Duncan. "We got our butts handed to us the last game. We came back here and just put together a great game all around."

The Heat lost the home-court edge in game one in Miami losing 92-88, then hammered the Spurs 103-84 in game two. But Tim Duncan and his stellar supporting cast seized crucial game three by shocking the reigning NBA champions Miami 113-77 to take a 2-1 series lead.

The 36-point margin was the

third-largest victory in NBA finals history. The Chicago Bulls beat the Utah Jazz by 42 points in game three of the 1998 finals and in 2008 the Boston Celtics thumped the Los Angeles Lakers by 39 points in game six.

"They got into an incredible rhythm and we were playing behind from the start," Miami coach Erik Spoelstra said. "I didn't recognize the team (Heat) that was out there."

San Antonio will host the next two games of the best-of-seven series with game four set for tonight in San Antonio.

Game threes have proved pivotal in recent NBA finals history. The winner of the third game in NBA finals series that are split 1-1 has won the title 12 of the last 13 times.

San Antonio guard Danny Green continued his torrid shooting streak from beyond the arc Tuesday by making seven-of-nine from three-point range after going five-for-five

in game two.

But not to be outdone, Gary Neal came off the bench to score a playoff career high 24 points, falling just five points shy of his overall career high of 29 points.

"Those guys stepping up on this stage in this game for us is huge," Duncan said.

Spurs coach Gregg Popovich told how he cut Green not once, but two times, and had to be convinced by an assistant coach to give him another chance this season.

"We actually cut him twice," Popovich said. "He handled it well. We brought him back this year. He is a pretty confident young man right now."

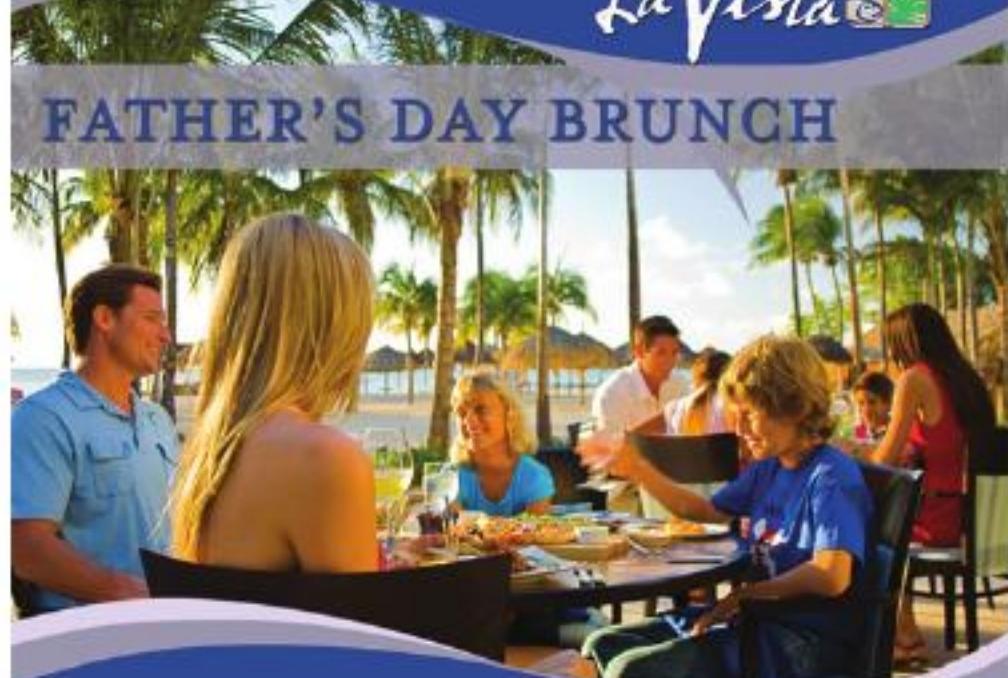
Green's 27 points were also a post-season career high.

"Luckily I've been open. I hit some shots," Green said.

But don't count out the Heat, because they have responded after each defeat this season in spectacular fashion. Miami, who is seeking dynasty status, have not lost back-to-back games since early January.

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## NBA: Parker hopes to be fit for next NBA finals match

SAN ANTONIO (AFP) - French dynamo Tony Parker said he is hopeful of being able to play Thursday night after suffering a hamstring sprain in game three of the NBA finals.

Parker was examined by San Antonio Spurs' team doctors and underwent a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan Wednesday which showed he suffered a "grade one" strain of his right hamstring. The team has listed him as day-to-day.

"Today the MRI just confirmed what I felt was a strain, and I was just hoping it was not a tear or a defect," Parker said at the Spurs practice on Wednesday. "So the good news is it's not a tear. Now I just have to see how I'm going to feel tomorrow."

Game four is today at ATT Center arena.

The all-star point guard was injured in the Spurs' 113-77 blowout victory over the de-

fending NBA champion Miami Heat in game three of the league championship series on Tuesday. The Spurs lead the series two games to one.

Parker had six points and eight assists in 27 minutes of playing time before heading to the locker room. He returned briefly in the fourth quarter.

"I don't feel pressure," Parker said. "I will just talk with Pop (coach Gregg Popovich) and we'll make a decision."

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